

Bob Skarphol: from my perspective...

Lawmaker commends ConnectND workers

A previously skeptical state legislator is now praising the ConnectND effort. Here is an unsolicited message from Rep. Bob Skarphol, R-Tioga, to Grant Crawford, ConnectND's higher education project director:

I do not believe there was a bigger skeptic of the need for, nor the achievability of, the implementation of Connect ND on time and on budget than myself. When I was asked to serve on the Executive Sponsors Committee, I was certain that I would be there to see the constant excuses and misrepresentation of progress of the project. I now know that I could not have been more wrong. I am incredibly impressed with the particular success of the higher education portion of this implementation.

As you well know, no one asks more questions, and expects immediate answers, more than I. I really appreciate your complete and total honesty about the potential problems and pitfalls. As a legislator, I will deal with the truth, but I will make life miserable for anyone trying to deal with me in a distorted or dishonest fashion.

The achievements of the vast majority of the NDUS personnel working on this project are truly impressive. I know, based on our discussions and discussions with other individuals, that there have been untold volunteer hours committed by many individuals in the university system. They have shown incredible levels of perseverance and professionalism to bring this project to its current state.

I know that you, and the university system office, are concerned about the employee burn out issue. I know that you are concerned about meeting the July 1 deadline, and I assure you that it is a legitimate concern, but I truly believe that you will meet the timeline. Whenever we discuss what appears to be an insurmountable problem, your people always come through and I think they have the remaining energy burst to bring this to a successful conclusion.

I believe people deserve to hear about a job well done.

I think that North Dakota should be proud of what has been accomplished within a very limited timeframe. I, also, fully understand and can appreciate that every wrinkle has not been ironed out. Additional time and resources will be needed to make it flow as desired. But it has also been relayed to me by the project leader from Maximus, that it is his opinion it would be extremely difficult to find a more dedicated IT group in the nation.

I cannot give enough kudos to your staff, and I will even give a little credit to you.

Please tell your staff congratulations on a great job, in advance. I am confident that they will make it, and the entire state should be made aware of their achievement.

(Bob Skarphol serves on the House Appropriations Committee and the Budget Section and interim Information Technology Committee. He's one of two legislators on the Information Technology Advisory Committee, which advises the state Information Technology Department, and one of two legislators who serve as ConnectND Executive Sponsors.)



State Rep. Bob Skarphol

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Report tracking ConnectND readiness

The higher education project is developing a new ConnectND Go-Live Readiness Report to help measure and monitor progress as implementation approaches.

As the report indicates, ConnectND is working toward go-live as scheduled around July 1 for all systems. But with this complex implementation there are defined points along the way to assess the readiness of the software systems and the operational environment, and determine how prepared each of the campuses is.

Assessments compiled by campuses following systems testing (iteration 2) are considered along with other information to color-code and update a summary.

FAMIS chosen for facilities management

Higher education has selected FAMIS software to manage facilities operations. FAMIS Software, Inc., headquartered in Irvine, California, provides software products and services to help organizations effectively and efficiently maintain and operate facilities assets, manage space and control capital projects.

Work on the program begins in a few weeks. FAMIS is slated to replace the facilities management portion of the current administrative system by July 2005 at the University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University and the State College of Science.

NDSU, UND and NDSCS will serve as pilots site; the software license will allow other campuses and state operations to join the operation later. FAMIS will be an ancillary system to ConnectND. Implementation funding for the hardware and software, and consultant and staff compensation, will come from a variety of sources including the student ConnectND fee. This initiative has been led by Joan Chapek of NDSU on behalf of the University System.

ConnectND Web site 'compliant'

Through extensive work by its webmaster, the ConnectND Web site <http://www.nodak.edu/connectnd/> is now compliant with the Web Accessibility Initiative—it meets the "Double A" standard as set by the World Wide Web Consortium and also applied by the North Dakota Department of Information Technology.

A plan is being written to specify procedures for keeping the Web site compliant. At the same time, the purpose of the site remains to provide important and useful information about ConnectND—both the University System and the state government side of the project.

University System HRMS director named

Teri Thorsen has been appointed director of human resource management systems with the North Dakota University System.



Teri Thorsen

Thorsen, currently University System HRMS project manager for ConnectND, will continue to manage that implementation. As human resources management systems director, she will oversee ongoing development and continuing operation of PeopleSoft HRMS programs in ConnectND's replacement of administrative computer systems throughout the NDUS. Working with the Higher Education Computer Network, Thorsen reports to the University System's chief information officer. Her office is at North Dakota State University.

Thorsen was named NDSU's director of human resources in 1992 and began her ConnectND position in 2002. She was previously director of personnel at Concordia College, Moorhead, and at PFP Specialty Foods Inc.

Thorsen has a master of business administration from North Dakota State University and a bachelor of science in management from Moorhead State University, and is certified as a Senior Professional in Human Resources. She has been active in the national and state Society for Human Resource Management and with various North Dakota University System teams and task forces.

Mayville State student on Executive Steering Committee

Brian Grove, a senior at Mayville State University, will be the North Dakota Student's Association's new representative on the ConnectND Higher Education Executive Steering Committee. He takes over in May from Amy Richter of North Dakota State University.

Originally from Adams, Grove is majoring in secondary education social science. He has been active on the Mayville State Student Senate, Student Activities Council and Peer Education program. He has also been involved in drama and served as a student ambassador. Grove previously attended Lake Region State College in Devils Lake.

April and May IVN sessions

ConnectND general and topical updates are recorded by the Interactive Video Network through Web streaming. The temporary [video archive](http://streaming.ndivn.nodak.edu/ndivn/) is now on the IVN site at <http://streaming.ndivn.nodak.edu/ndivn/>. Click “recorded calls” to locate archived video stream.

The general updates of the overall ConnectND project are held the second Thursday of each month over IVN. The monthly NDUS system (financial, human resources management, and student administration) sessions are held on a rotating basis. All the April and May sessions will be at 9 a.m. The upcoming schedule is:

- Thursday, April 22
—NDUS Student System
- Thursday, May 6
—NDUS Financial System
- Thursday, May 13
—ConnectND Project Update
- Thursday, May 20
—NDUS Human Resource Mgmt System
- Thursday, May 27
—NDUS Student System

Everyone is invited to attend the IVN update sessions. Specific locations are indicated on the [calendar](#).

Vision Statement: *The NDUS supports a service-oriented environment where the focus is on providing students, faculty, staff and others access to information and services, at any time, from anywhere.*

Training will employ various formats

Plans are being finalized for ConnectND training with the North Dakota University System. A proposed detailed schedule has been sent to the campus implementation chairs for final review.

Functional training for front-line or “power users” of the new Student Administration, Financial and Human Resource Management Systems will be conducted on a just-in-time basis, usually a couple weeks before implementation.

When does it start?

Student Administration, which will start rolling out its new systems in June, has set formal classroom training to begin the week of May 31 in Minot and will continue in Grand Forks the week of June 14.

Training for primary users of Human Resource Management Systems training is scheduled the week of June 21 in Bismarck and the following week in Fargo.

Finance System training is planned for the weeks of June 28 in Bismarck and July 5 in Fargo.

Less-formal training?

Detailed training and user manuals are being developed by personnel from the project team and Maximus, the project consulting firm. However, most employees will have more limited involvement with the new systems and may receive adequate training in brief electronic formats such as WebEx demonstrations or other published resources such as those provided on the NDUS Documentation and Training Web site <http://www.und.edu/dept/cndtrain/>.

Campus and University System training personnel have for some time been conducting seminars to enhance computer user proficiency and skills, and are recommending that employees take advantage of free PeopleSoft tutorials.

**NDUS ‘Go-live’
Schedules on page 4**





Stay tuned—

University System ‘go-live’ schedules

Here are tentative “go-live” schedules for most modules of ConnectND in the North Dakota University System:

▷ Student Administration

- Week of June 21 – Minot State University, Dickinson State University and MSU-Bottineau.
- Week of June 28 – Bismarck State College, Lake Region State College, and Williston State College.
- Week of July 5 – North Dakota State University, State College of Science and University of North Dakota.

▷ Human Resource Management Systems – week of July 12.

▷ Finance Systems – week of July 26.

A detailed calendar of the tentative schedules for testing, training and roll-out of the various modules within the NDUS has been provided to the campus implementation chairs.

NDUS campuses ‘test’ early this year

There’s a traditional connection between campuses and tests. Now is “test” time for ConnectND within the University System.

Formal testing of the new software is done through three iterations (also called cycles). Student Administration completed second iteration testing April 8, while the Finance and Human Resources Management Systems have recently finished the first iteration. (Note: Student Administration originally expected to implement one month prior to Finance and HRMS and thus is one cycle ahead in testing.)

What’s coming up?

Student Administration is testing by groups of campuses. Minot State University, Minot State University-Bottineau and Dickinson State University launch iteration three testing April 26; North Dakota State University and the University of North Dakota the following week; and the State College of Science, Williston State College, Lake Region State College and Bismarck State College the week of May 10.

Iteration 2 testing begins the week of April 26 for Finance Systems and the week of May 3 for HRMS. For the Finance grants and contracts module, a prototype has been designed and is being tested for the smaller campuses as an alternative to the more complex PeopleSoft functionality that will be required by UND, NDSU and Minot State. Iteration three testing for Finance and HRMS modules begins the week of May 31.

What are the iterations?

Iteration one testing is within modules, iteration two within the Student Administration, Financial or Human Resources Management System and iteration three across ConnectND.

In classroom tests, students are expected to know answers to questions. ConnectND testing *identifies* problems; then, the answers are found.



Aloha!

Recruitment and admission won the Hawaiian Day competition during iteration 2 testing in Minot. From L: Rebecca Rowe and Lynda Bertsch, Minot; Debbie Dowhaniuk, Heather Muckle, and Deb Dazell, Dickinson; Sandy Mahar, Maximus; Tricia Campbell, HECN; Lauralee Moseanko, Minot; Penny Hoesel, NDSU; Luann Soland and Jody Klier, Bottineau; Joseph Dobzynski, Maximus; and Marvel Thompson, Bottineau. Photo by Lisa Johnson

NDUS Help Desk recommends Office XP

The NDUS Help Desk is recommending Microsoft (MS) Office XP for frequent or “power” users of ConnectND within the University System.

Macros to generate various standard letters and reports have been developed by the Student Administration project team for MS Office 2000 and XP. They should also work fine with MS Office 2003, but that hasn’t been fully tested.

The HECN software licensing program is allowed to sell MS Office 2003, but this can be “downgraded” to MS Office 2000 or XP. Check with your campus software licensing contact for more information.

Campuses develop Web sites to guide local implementation

Minot State University has now created its own ConnectND Web site: <http://www.misu.nodak.edu/connectnd/peoplesoft>. The University of North Dakota and North Dakota also have sites tailored for campus ConnectND constituents. Like its counterparts, the Minot State site features a variety of resources and links.

The first issue of the UND ConnectND Newsletter and the Frequently-Asked-Questions document about the upcoming payroll change are currently featured on the University of North Dakota site: <http://www.und.nodak.edu/cnd/>. A second newsletter is expected soon.

The North Dakota State University site <http://connect.ndsu.nodak.edu/> has several categories of information specific to NDSU’s project implementation and more is being added.

Faculty and staff on other campuses may find it helpful to peruse the information on these localized ConnectND sites.

HECN security staff enlists help from campus access control officers

Higher Education Computer Network (HECN) ConnectND security staff implement and maintain security policies for ConnectND, ancillary systems and related systems. In practice, PeopleSoft campuses typically don’t distribute security and access control management outside of the data center operation because of security concerns. However, in a multi-campus environment, HECN will need campus personnel to help students with access and to recommend access for their faculty and staff.

To provide the access that students require, and to manage the HECN ConnectND security staff workload, HECN will ask campuses to create student

user identifications (called “userids” in PeopleSoft) and set or reset student passwords in the Student Administration environment. Faculty and staff ConnectND access control will be provided by HECN ConnectND security staff. However, campus access control officers will need to recommend appropriate roles so faculty and staff have access to information they need to do their work.

Campuses have identified campus access control officers who will work closely with HECN ConnectND security staff and with Finance, Human Resource and Student systems directors.

View taped discussion of ConnectND

A videotape of the staff NDSU Staff Senate workshop presentation and discussion of the ConnectND project is now available from the project Web site. The presentation is broken into four segments for easier listening. They are:

- √ Presentation: ConnectND overview (Jean Ostrom-Blonigen)
- √ Presentation: ConnectND at VCSU (Ellen Chaffee)
- √ Presentation: ConnectND elsewhere (James Kennedy)
- √ Presentation: Payroll cycle issues (Jean Ostrom-Blonigen)

Project oversight report

The project oversight team on April 9 continued the overall project in a “yellow” cautionary status, indicating there’s good probability it will meet dates and acceptable quality although schedule or resource changes may be needed.

Progress continues on open issues and rollout appears to be on track, but open risks and overdue tasks are a concern. Grants and contracts area still posing a risk. Overall, the project seems to be moving along well.

Words & acronyms

ERP—“Enterprise Resource Planning” System or “Enterprise Resource Package.” Essentially, it means an administrative software system that covers the entire enterprise – from students to employees to financial management. While our current administrative systems (commonly known as SAMIS or CICS) were developed long before “ERP” was even thought of, they are essentially our ERP today.

Legacy System—An application in which a company or organization has previously already invested considerable time and money. Examples of legacy systems to be replaced by ConnectND are CICS (used by NDUS staff), ALFI (used by students) and SAMIS (used in state government).

MAXIMUS—Founded in 1975, serves as the implementation partner on the Connect North Dakota Project, and will be responsible for developing an implementation and deployment plan that addresses the major business areas, key agency and campus participants and critical project completion dates.

PeopleSoft—Founded in the mid-1980s, this company builds applications on a client-server platform instead of using the traditional mainframe. This product should provide both the state and the university system with the ability to operate within a real-time environment on a system-wide basis.

WebEX—A licensed program for interactive communication over the World Wide Web and telephone. Sessions can be recorded and archived.

Web-streamed—Recorded live and broadcast real-time via the Internet to those who cannot be at the event location.

About ConnectND

What is ConnectND?

The CONNECT ND project is the implementation of *PeopleSoft's* ERP system that will replace North Dakota's current administrative computer systems. The ERP system will serve as the administrative systems for the entire enterprise – from students to employees to financial management.

Who is involved in ConnectND?

All of North Dakota State Government, including the North Dakota University System, is involved in this project.

How is the ConnectND project organized?

The project has been organized by module (functional area) into three state groups (Financial, Human Resources Management System, and Technical) and four higher education groups (Financial, Human Resources Management System, Student Administration, and Technical).

Fyi & updates

April 2004

How is ConnectND being implemented?

Under the leadership of a State Executive Steering Committee (co-chaired by Lee Vickers, president, Dickinson State University and Pam Sharp, director, Office of Management and Budget) and with the help of our implementation partner, *MAXIMUS*, the project is being implemented using a four-component approach.

Components 1 and 2:

These components include the five-phases of Initiation, Design, Development, Migration, and Post-production phases at the pilot sites.

Components 3 and 4:

These components include the five-phases of Initiation, Design, Development, Migration, and Post-production phases at all the non-pilot sites.

Has end-user training been scheduled?

Project managers are scheduling functional/content end-user training using a just-in-time approach. The training can only be done effectively after procedures and processes to design, develop and configure the systems have been completed. For additional information, please see the article on training (page 3).

Links mentioned

- **Calendar:** http://www.nodak.edu/connectnd/calendar/index.php?action=show_month&month
- **Connect ND:** www.nodak.edu/connectnd
- **MAXIMUS:** www.maximus.com
- **North Dakota University System:** www.ndus.nodak.edu
- **PeopleSoft:** www.peoplesoft.com
- **State of North Dakota:** www.discovernd.com/

Comments and suggestions regarding this publication are welcome.

We encourage questions about this newsletter or the project. To facilitate this process, you may ask a question electronically through the Web site [FAQ](#) (Frequently

Asked Questions) section. It's also a place to view the questions others have asked and the responses of the project teams.



More information, questions or comments: www.nodak.edu/connectnd
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